OCTOBER 1957

The Reformed Journal

A PERIODICAL OF REFORMED COMMENT AND OPINION

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By LESTER DEKOSTER

The Nature of the Unity We Seek

By JOHN H. KROMMINGA

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Volume VII

OCTOBER 1957

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Publisher

William B. Eerdmans, Sr.

THE INTELLECTUAL LIFE
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THE NATURE OF THE UNITY WE SEEK
Dr. John H. Kromminga, *President, Calvin College Seminary*

THE DUTCH CALVINIST LABOR MOVEMENT, 1870-1910
Dr. Dirk W. Jellema, *Instructor, Department of Social Studies Case Institute of Technology*

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LETTERS

PUBLISHED MONTHLY, excepting August, by the Wm. B. Eerdmans P lishing Company, at 231 Jefferson Avenue, S.E., Grand Rapids 3, Michig Entered as second-class matter at the Post Office at Grand Rapids, Michig SUBSCRIPTION RATES: 25c per copy; $2.50 one year; $4.00 two ye ADDRESS all subscriptions to Subscription Department, *The Reform Journal*, 231 Jefferson Avenue, S. E., Grand Rapids 3, Michigan. Addr all editorial and advertising communications to Managing Editor and Adv tising Manager respectively.
Managing Editor: Calvin P. Bulthuis; Advertising Manager: David Wynbe

The Intellectual Life

by Lester DeKoster

O SOME FEW MEN is it given to be widely known intellectual prowess in their own generation; to e fewer men is it given to be remembered for llectual eminence by succeeding generations; to fewer men — very few indeed of all who live die — is it given to rise intellectually like tere peaks round which the centuries roll. One h peak was — or should it be *is?* — Saint Thom- Aquinas.

upposing a student were granted the chance to such an one as Thomas for his counsel to (even least of) those who seek intellectual excellence ause they love learning. How eagerly one might ait the reply. Fortunately, such a question was ed of Saint Thomas, by one, a certain Brother n. Thomas made reply. In a letter still extant presented Brother John with sixteen "Precepts Acquiring the Treasure of Knowledge." Called v the *Modo Studendi,* the precepts have been nslated by Father White and published by the ckfriars of Oxford. Who has perused the pre- us letter over the seven millennia that separate from its writing, and with what profit, who ows? The latest to erect a program for "the in- lectual life" upon the sixteen pillars is Father A. Sertillanges of Paris.

His volume, first published in France in 1920, one ich went through many editions there, was trans- ed by Mary Ryan in 1948 and now appears in its rd edition in English.[1] Into the mold of Thomas' teen precepts Father Sertillanges pours the dis- late of much wisdom of his own. He proffers a allenging invitation to taste and see that the in- lectual life is good, an invitation he extends even those who can give but a few, say, two hours a y to thought and reading: "You, young men who derstand this language and to whom the heroes the mind seem mysteriously to beckon, but who ar to lack the necessary means, listen to me. Have u two hours a day? Can you undertake to keep em jealously, to use them ardently, and then, be- g of those who have authority in the *Kingdom of od,* can you *drink the chalice* of which these pages ould wish to make you savour the exquisite and tter taste? If so have confidence. Nay, rest in iet certainty. If you are compelled to earn your ving, at least you will earn it without sacrificing, as so many do, the liberty of your soul. . . . The study and practice of what Pere Graty calls *Living Logic,* that is, the development of our mind, the human word, by contact direct or indirect with the Spirit and Divine Word, — that serious study and persevering practice will give you entry into the wondrous sanctuary. You will be of those who grow, who enrich themselves, and who make ready to receive magnificent gifts. You too, one day, if God so wills, will have a place in the assembly of noble minds."

No summary can retain the flavor, verve, insight and richness of this handbook to intellectual adventure. But some morsels caught so far as may be in the author's own words can, perhaps, serve in themselves a salutary purpose, and whet the appetite of some for tasting all of the whole.

The Intellectual Virtues

"By practicing the truth we know, we merit the truth that we do not know," writes Father Sertillanges, in an epigrammatic way stressing the significance of virtue for knowledge. The enemies of knowledge, stupidity apart, are all of them moral: sloth, sensuality, pride, envy, and irritation are those he lists. These are to be fought, and somewhat subdued, before learning can be achieved. "Purity of thought requires purity of soul; that is a general and undeniable truth. The neophyte of knowledge should let it sink deeply into his mind. . . . Only the pure in heart shall see God . . . .The more moral rectitude we bring to study, the more fruitful the study is." Seeing without sight, and hearing without understanding are the blight with which the undisciplined moral life infects the tree of knowledge. The hours of study begin with the quiet of prayer.

There is, moreover, our author tells us, a virtue proper to the intellectual life itself. Father Sertillanges calls it "studiousness." Its definition may be approached by considering the two vices to which this virtue is opposed: "negligence" and "vain curiosity." Of the former nothing need be said, but the latter is insidious. "Vain curiosity" wears the air of virtue; indeed, of absorption in one's work, an absorption carried so far as to crowd out other duties and obligations: "other duties than study are human duties. . . . One sees many men avid for knowledge who do not hesitate to sacrifice to it

1. *The Intellectual Life.* Westminster, Md.: Newman ress, 1956. $3.75.

their strictest duties. They are not men of study, they are dilettanti. Or else they abandon the study demanded by their obligations and take up some other that flatters their inclination, and their loss of quality is the same."

"Vain curiosity," again, is to seek what is beyond one's grasp, to reach for the top fruit before patiently climbing the branches: one of Thomas' precepts, "I want you to decide to go to the sea by the streams, not directly." Or, once more, it is "vain curiosity" to substitute study for times of prayer, meditation, and Scripture reading: to suppose that so doing "will further our progress and enrich our production is to say that the stream will flow better if its spring is dried up."

Positively, "studiousness" means that one "must cultivate, in the work itself, the spirit of prayer," that is, consciously refer each particular truth to *the* Truth, regard each separate truth as "a sacrament of the absolute." It means that the student assumes all the obligations of man, parent, citizen, Christian. "Studiousness" obliges the intellectual to "endeavor to keep well," physically fit, spiritually refreshed, in order to become when he works, as was said of Thomas, "an intellect served by organs."

Organization of Life

Let the student — whoever he may be that can give two hours a day or more — *organize* his life for intellectual enterprise. First, let him "simplify: If you want to entertain knowledge as your guest, you do not need rare furniture, nor numerous servants. Much peace, a little beauty, certain conveniences that save time, are all that is necessary. . . . Slacken the tempo of your life." Avoid the frivolous and cut down the social. To this achievement the scholar's wife, if there be one, can contribute by wise handling of the calendar; she can contribute more by quiet inspiration, sure management of household affairs, and gentle spurring: "having married a vocation, let her have the vocation also. . . . If a married man is in a certain sense 'divided' let him also be doubled." So also: "children complicate life, but so sweetly that they should serve to give the worker fresh courage rather than to lessen his resources . . . they can heighten your inspiration by mingling joy with it; they give you a love-lit reflection of nature and of man and thus defend you agaist the abstract; they bring you back to the real, about which their questioning eyes are waiting for an exact commentary from you. Their pure faces preach integrity, that sister of knowledge. . . ."

Second, seek for solitude, interior and exterior: "Retirement is the laboratory of the spirit." On this above all did Thomas lay stress: "you will be more a man and more with men when far from them" — for study, that is, and religious offi not, of course, for endless pursuit of "vain c osity." No recluse was Thomas himself. Wr Sertillanges, "He who thinks himself united v God without being united with his brothers i *liar,* says the apostle . . . but he who is unite men and to nature without being hiddenly un to God — without being a lover of silence and itude — is but the subject of the kingdom of dea

Third, let the fruits of solitude be ripened in sociation with others who love truth: "friends is an obstetric art; it draws out our richest deepest resources; it unfolds the wings of dreams and hidden indeterminate thoughts; serves as a check on our judgments, tries out new ideas, keeps up our ardour, and inflames enthusiasm." There is strength in the knowle that others also labor, and in the assurance "t the parts of the watch, to each of which a h worker devotes his exclusive attention, will be together by God." Select your associates with c since time is limited. Choose superior minds, remember that "in society a man passes the m surely for clever, the more he has killed his int gence."

When to Study

When? Always!

Two hours a day for the disciplined work, y but, like prayer, let the alert awareness be pres always. To the receptive mind, the meanest exp ence may be a parable, "every fact may give ris a great thought . . . every road opened is a corri to God. Learn to look; compare what is before with your familiar or secret ideas. Do not see i town merely houses, but human life and history. Learn to listen; and listen, first, to anyone." F "what is knowledge, but the slow and gradual c of our blindness?" And, as the student "co forth from the narrow space in which his conc trated study is done, one gets the impression, that he is leaving the True behind, but that he throwing his door wide open so that the world m bring to him all the truth given out in its mig activities."

Learn, thus, to use also the hours of sleep, by c ing to mind as drowsiness comes the elements the problem of the moment. For many a thinker found that the alchemy of the night will form separate strands for easy grasping in the lucidity the morning.

What to Study

The field of specialization must be chosen by student in the light of his bent; but let him "m trust his specialty in the beginning," for pursu too exclusively any branch of knowledge warps out of contact with life itself. "Mathematics

hemselves warp the judgment, accustoming it to a igour that no other science admits of, still less fe. Physics, chemistry, obsess you by their complexity and give no breadth to the mind. Physiology leads to materialism, astronomy to vague peculation; geology turns you into a nosing hound, iterature makes you hollow, philosophy inflates ou, theology hands you over to false sublimity and nagisterial pride. You must pass from one spirit o the other so as to correct one by the other; you nust cross your crops in order not to ruin the soil."

Acquire as soon as possible, and from the best ource, "a body of directive ideas forming a whole, nd capable, like a magnet, of attracting and subrdinating to itself all knowledge." Such directive deas Father Sertillanges finds, of course, in Saint Thomas. "Study Saint Thomas, he is the man of ur day. You would think he had been created seven enturies ago to quench our thirst." (The Protestant as no Angelic Doctor from whom to take over a ody of directive ideas, though it is "his" Church, oo, from whence arose a Saint Augustine, a Saint Thomas, as well as a Luther and a Calvin. And aving won through to a body of directive ideas of is own, the Protestant will find them no less true n that, if he recognizes his own parentage, it is rom the well of history, too, that he draws wisdom ven as he sees light only in the revealed Light.)

Avoiding narrowness and premature specialization, let the student remember that "true knowledge (*scientia,* science in its fundamental sense) lies in depth rather than in superficial extent." Let him plow deep one furrow, and let him choose the one which runs easiest for himself because "it is very important to work in joy, therefore with relative ease, therefore in the direction of one's aptitudes. . . . Know what you have resolved to know; cast a glance at the rest. Leave to God, who will look after it, what does not belong to your proper vocation. Do not be a deserter from yourself, through wanting to substitute yourself for all others."

The Spirit of Work

Concentrate: "let each task take entire hold of you, as if it were the only one."

Submit: "truth will not give itself to us unless we are first rid of self. . . . Discovery is the result of sympathy; and sympathy is the gift of self. . . . Let your mind be the wax, not the seal." Respect truth where you find it, and be indifferent as to the source: "what matters in an idea is not its origin but its magnitude." The gift of knowledge is to those who obey, who humbly seek and gladly find.

Keep the sense of mystery: "those who think that they understand everything prove by that alone that they have grasped nothing . . . the man of petty mind imagines that he possesses the cosmos and what it contains; carrying a pail in his hand with a gallon of shimmering water he says: Look, I have got hold of the ocean and the stars."

Preparation for Work

Reading. "The first rule is to read little," that is, to avoid with care "the laziness in disguise which prefers easy familiarity with others' thought to personal effort." Let the student beware in that "the passion for reading . . . differs in no wise from the other passions that monopolize the soul." It is not, first of all, the quantity but rather the quality of the reading that matters, the reading which stimulates reflection and original insight rather than that which drugs and benumbs the mind. The mere accumulation of information is not knowledge.

The second rule for reading is that the student must choose his own books, and in so doing be sure that he "associates only with the best." Not that the masters need his homage but because as "the Communion of Saints is the support of the mystical life, the Banquet of the Sages, perpetuated by our assiduous cult, is the invigoration of our intellectual life. To cultivate the faculty of admiration and because of it to keep constantly in familiar touch with illustrious thinkers, is the means, not of equalling those whom we honour, but of equalling our own best self; and that, I repeat, is the objective to be visualized and pursued."

The third rule of reading is to remember that one may learn much from those with whom he disagrees, for "directly, we owe everything to truth alone, but indirectly we owe to those who are in error the mental development that, thanks to them, Providence provides for us."

Fourth, one must recognize differences but should not dwell upon them. "An essential condition for profiting by our reading, whether of ordinary books or those of writers of genius, is to tend always to reconcile our authors instead of setting one against another. The critical spirit has its place; we may have to disentangle opinions and classify men. . . . But when the aim is formation of the mind, personal profit, or even a teacher's exposition, it is quite a different matter. In these cases, it is not the thoughts, but the truths, that interest us; not men's disputes, but their work and what is lasting in it. It is futile to linger endlessly over differences; the fruitful research is to look for points of contact. Here Saint Thomas gives us an admirable example. . . . He was an Aristotelian, but learned also on Plato; without being an Augustinian, he fed his mind constantly on Augustine. . . . The man who wants to acquire, from his authors, not fighting qualities, but truth and penetration, must bring to them this spirit of conciliation and diligent harvesting, the

spirit of the bee. Honey is made of many kinds of flowers."

Fifth, reading is for thought and subordinate to it. "When we read, our masters must not be a goal for us, but a starting-point. A book is a cradle, not a tomb."

Memory. Exercise it, but do not store away too much, lest the stream of living thought be impeded. Thomas proposed four rules for memorization: "(1) To set in order what one wants to remember; (2) to apply the mind deeply to it; (3) to think it over often; (4) when one wants to recollect it, to take the chain of connections by one end, which will bring the rest with it."

Notes. Avoid excess, and make them rather your own thoughtful reaction to the reading than a mere digest of the reading itself.

Creative Work

The intellectual is no sponge, forever absorbing; his calling is to create, however humbly; to let the light shine through the prism of his thinking, however dimly. For this "one finds one's way only by taking it. . . . You must write throughout the whole of your intellectual life. . . . In the first place one writes for oneself . . ." but "when you write, you must publish, as soon as good judges think you are capable of it and you yourself feel some aptitude for that flight." Such is the foundation for further intellectual progress: "it is certain that for the majority of people, the pen as it runs plays the part of the trainer at games. To speak is to listen to one's soul, and to the truth within it."

There are many definitions of style, "but they can all be contained, I think, in these three words: truth, individuality, and simplicity."

"Writing truly, that is writing according to one's thought, is revealing what is, not stringing sentences together. And so the secret of writing is to stand and study things ardently, until they speak to you and themselves determine their own expression."

Writing with individuality is being oneself. "One must not have a *manner;* truth has none; it is then objectively real; it is always fresh and new. But truth cannot fail to have an individual ring on each of its instruments," and this is what is called originality.

Finally, for simplicity "cultivate the art of omission, of elimination, of simplification: that is the secret of strength."

In thus producing lies the joy of the intellectual life. "The important thing is not what we shall get out of knowledge, but what we can give to it. The essential thing is not the reception accorded to our words, but the reception that we ourselves have given to truth, and that we are disposing others to give to it. . . . It is intolerable pride to try to force truth into our personal mold, and it ends in stupidity."

And be patient, though time seems to fleet and results are meager. "Why press on immoderately when the road itself is a goal, the means an end? Intellectual activity has its own worth, at every stage. Effort is a virtue and a conquest. He who works for God and as God wills abides in God. What does it matter if time runs on, when one is established in God?" And so, "nothing must be in excess. . . . . Give up nothing of what belongs to man. . . . Learn to defend a thesis and to look at sunrise, to bury yourself in profound abstraction and to play, like the Divine Master, with children . . . To spend too much time in studies is sloth."

* * * *

" 'If you follow this course,' says Saint Thomas to his disciple, 'you will bear in the Lord's vineyard foliage and fruit that will be useful all the time of your life. If you put these counsels into practice, you will attain what you desire. Adieu.' "

A REQUEST

The *Journal* would very much appreciate receiving copies of the following back issues:

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For each copy received the *Journal* will extend a reader's subscription one month.

CORRECTIONS

The Editors regret that certain errors crept into the September 1957 issue of the *Journal* The corrections follow:

1. Page 20: the right and left columns should be transposed.

2. Page 26, first column, last full paragraph should read: ". . . in order that the moral power of our whole Reformed Church may be against a great and growing evil. Thereupon the Synod adopted the following:" . . . .

3. Page 29, second column, second full paragraph should read: But debate with the Christian Reformed Church, severely critical of the Reformed Church on this issue, continued. Members of the Reformed Church in America took heart . . . .

The Nature of the Unity We Seek

by John H. Kromminga

N INTER-SEMINARY discussion held a few years go was built around the theme, "Theological Edu-ation Becomes Ecumenical." In the estimation of his observer the discussion of that theme was ather unproductive. But for all the failure of the iscussion, the ecumenical question is a very live ne in the schools. It touches on the life of all orts of schools, independent, university related, nd confessional. And it ought to do so. For the uestion of unity is no mere matter of ecclesiastical olitics or statesmanship. It raises deep questions n every branch of theological learning. It involves heology proper, Biblical criticism, apologetics and thics, historical and practical questions, and, last ut not least, the mission of the church in the world.

No one can accuse the ecumenical leaders of our ay of lack of vision. The scope of the ecumenical uestion is admirably reflected in a statement of Bishop Chandy Ray, as reported in *Theology To-ay*: "Our task is one church with one mission to ne world for the whole man." One can discern in hat statement a reference to ecclesiology, to denom-nationalism, to international relations, and to psy-hology. Is all this the church's business? No one who loves the Christian Reformed Church can say hat we have nothing to do with this problem.

THE NATURE of the Unity We Seek" is not an original title. It is borrowed from the discus-sions of those churches which are members of the World Council. It is a fact often noted, but it will bear one more repetition, that the World Council itself is not crystal-clear on the nature of the unity which it proposes to its member communions. Some advocates of unity, it seems, are desirous of pressing on with all possible haste to a super-church. Some critics act as if this is the unquestioned desire of all members — which is certainly not the case. Others claim that the council will do best if it con-tinues to provide a forum for discussion, while each church maintains its own sovereignty and performs its work in the spirit evoked by the conversations. What then is the correct answer? As yet there is none. When the question is plainly put so as to elicit a plain answer, the official answer which is given is equivocal. Therefore the member churches do well to discuss this question with each other. And the non-members do well to observe closely what answers are given.

What has this to do with our own church? The very fact that it has anything to do with our church is a fact to be stressed. We have been in-clined, due in part to our isolationist past, to re-gard all such questions and discussions as disre-putable. But this attitude could not be more wrong. Carl E. Schneider, in *The Christian Century*, has said, "The complacency with which the denomina-tions regard their inherited confessional positions as a final terminus constitutes a pressing ecumen-ical concern of our day." Is this anti-confessional-ism? It may be. Perhaps it is, in the article in which this statement is found. But it is not neces-sarily so. There is food for thought in the conten-tion that the Lutherans have been content to rest with what their great leader has said, disregarding Calvin; and Calvinists have been unwilling to go beyond their prototype who, however great, did not see all things. Our own cherished Heidelberg Cat-echism was a document designed to overcome sim-ilar tensions between Calvinists and Lutherans in the day in which it was written. But this spirit has not received the attention it should have received in the interpretations of the catechism to which we are accustomed.

We may digress long enough to remark that even the relation of Calvinists to Calvin has not been ideal. John Calvin had a system, with which we are familiar, although not as familiar as we ought to be. But Calvin arrived at his system especially through thorough study of the Scriptures. His fol-lowers have by no means approached his eminence in this respect. Calvinists are in danger of perish-ing for lack of Calvin's vision. The very least they should do today is to approach the thoroughness with which others — themselves not Calvinists — are studying the work of the great Reformer.

But to return to our subject, the question of unity centers about these very respectable theological concerns: what is the church and what is the na-ture of its mission in the world? Whether we want to or not, the church cannot escape these questions. They arise wherever cooperation with another church is called for, wherever the members come into contact with unbelief; in short, wherever the church is in the world. These are not merely some-one else's problems. We do not have to borrow them to make them our own. We cannot do mission work without asking repeatedly what it is that we are doing. We cannot be a church without asking what it really is that we are.

No matter how we try, we cannot limit these questions to our own denomination or relegate them

to one department of the seminary. Our study of ecclesiology simply cannot be purely denominational. And, to harp on an old theme, the mission of the church is not the preoccupation of the missions department alone. It impinges on systematics, on Biblical studies, on historical and practical subjects. All of them may be understood as attempting to delineate what the church's task in the world is and how it is to be performed.

In short, we cannot do theological work without seeking the answers to the questions of unity and mission. Do we share the task of one church with one mission to one world for the whole man? Whatever the answer, we cannot escape the question. It has come upon us while we were not looking, but here it is. Whatever isolation we may seek to preserve, there is a certain unpremeditated solidarity with Christian scholarship in general in the very nature of the questions we face. And perplexing though the problems are, there is something very consoling about this. For it proves that we are not dead, nor completely blind to the world's needs or deaf to its pleas. And it proves also that we do not have a complete monopoly on the concern for the proper constitution and proper functioning of Christ's church here on earth. Thank God for that!

WITH THESE THINGS in mind, we may turn to consider the ecumenical questions in microcosm, as they will concretely face our own denomination in the immediate future. It is interesting and inspiring to note that the Christian Reformed Church has today committed itself to more union discussions than it ever before carried on at one time. What will come of these discussions? I imagine there must be very few in our own denomination who do not at the moment hope they are successful. And undoubtedly there must be those in the other denominations also who are eager for their success. But will this guarantee the outcome?

The very strength of the other denominations, the very thing that attracts us to them, may be the obstacle. Every one of the denominations involved in these discussions is deeply committed to its own position and tradition. The doctrinal and practical points which will be discussed will differ in each case. But the questions will come down to these: Will any of these churches be willing to make concessions to the other? To abandon pet projects? To share confessions? To overlook past differences and bitterness? To change the very name of the church?

Time alone will bring the answers. But this will be a real test of the vision of our own denomination; of our maturity; of our ability to discern between essentials and non-essentials, between the blacks and whites and grays of denominational e istence. In the process of discussion we shall lea to know others. But of equal importance is that shall come to learn about ourselves. Indeed we sh learn about ourselves by learning to know t others. "Tell me who your friends are and I'll t you who you are." Has conservatism the power heal its own divisions? Is Reformed orthodoxy i curably divisive? Have we anything at all of t vision of one church with one message to one wor for the whole man? If we keep these things in mi the discussions of doctrine and practice which carry on within the church will not be concern solely for the past. The future is very much in t picture.

NEXT SUMMER we shall participate in the four assembly of the Reformed Ecumenical Syn Shall we call this a crucial assembly? Every su assembly is a crucial one. If the problems fac by this synod are not real problems, there is litt use in going to the effort and expense which such synod involves.

In this respect at least the next assembly will n fall short. Let us mention a few of the problem What will the conservative Reformed Churches the world, meeting in South Africa, say about t race problem? What will they say about apartheid — whether South African or North American apar heid? At least one forthright report on this que tion will be submitted for adoption. Will the churches for the sake of peace keep silent? The they will tacitly admit to the world that apartheid and Calvinism go together. But is this true?

What will this synod say about the World Cou cil of Churches? Since the synod last met in Edi burgh, two of the denominations represented the have been admitted to World Council membershi Will this result in tension and renunciation? T synod is for its members a substitute for Wor Council membership. Will it be a respectable sub stitute, speaking clearly on world problems? Wi it rise to its potential in this respect? Can it b made to serve as an agency through which theolog ical conversations are held with other ecumenica organizations? In short, will it mark time or g forward?

What will the Reformed Ecumenical Synod sa about revelation and inspiration? Commitment t the doctrines of revelation and inspiration is th very core of the strength of these churches. Wi they be able to phrase their description of those doc trines in ringing language which will both strengt en their own unity and command the respectful at tention of outside observers? If this is to be done a present, it shall have to come from the studies o

ien much like ourselves. If it is to be done in the ıture, it must be on the strength of the studies pur-ıed in our seminary and others like it throughout ıe world.

What is the nature of the unity represented in ıis synod? Is it a unity which is strong enough to e aggressive and constructive? Or is it to be rep-esentative of world-wide isolationism? The testi-ıony of the founding assembly of this synod belies solationism. We have time to quote only very riefly from that testimony, but it bears careful tudy. These churches, it was said,

> are deeply convinced that the Reformed witness to the truth of God has special significance, especially in the chaotic struggle of the spirits of our time. They have this conviction, not on the basis of a historically determined or scientific foundation, but as the assurance of simple faith, the faith which, according to the word of Scripture, overcometh the world, I John 5:4. It is our duty all the more to testify to this simple and child-like faith in the midst of the world now that the world has been shaken to its very foundation and there is on every hand a vain search for an immovable foundation and an unassailable certainty, on which the life of society and of the individual can rest.

Now can that vision be translated into a reality vhich will carry the synod on from assembly to as-ıembly? Shall we be able to learn anything in this ynod about the church's mission in the world? If o, this is a good place to learn. If not, the synod nay be a real impediment to the recognition of the hurch's task. It may confirm its member churches n the idea that all of the pertinent questions have lready been asked, and all of the correct answers lready given.

[S THIS interest in ecumenicity a newfangled no-tion adopted by a church which has begun to ose its moorings? Hardly. It is consistent with he positions adopted by the Christian Reformed Church back in the days when it was, according to our present opinion, deeply mired in isolationism. One report to synod describes the correspondence between provincial synods in the Netherlands, and then goes on to say:

> When later the leaven of collegialism penetrated more deeply, this correspondence lost its purity and significance; denominations were adored, and every one withdrew into his own denomination. But at present the ancient doctrine of the catholicity of the Church begins again to revive in harmony with the New Testament principle of the ecumenicity of the Church, and for that reason inter-churchly correspondence also is in need of more specific regulation. . . . Your committee would also greatly rejoice if soon a General Synod or Council of Reformed Churches would meet for the purpose of eliminating all foreign elements in the various Reformed Churches of our times, and of everywhere furthering sound development.

This report was written in 1898, when our church was still nine years short of being half a century old, and before any minister now active had been admitted to the ministry. That fact is encouraging. But it also confronts us with the serious challenge to effectuate what our forefathers desired, but were for many years unable to put into practice.

This responsibility confronts us even more clearly with respect to a report adopted by the Synod of 1944. This report was not written by young upstarts. It was signed by five men. Three of them, Professors Berkhof, Kromminga, and Volbeda, were teaching at Calvin Seminary and have since joined the Church Triumphant. Rev. I. Van Dellen was already retired at the time he signed the report. Only Dr. J. T. Hoogstra is still active, still pursuing in the active ministry the ideals set down in the report. Once again we can quote only briefly from the lengthy report, but the two brief quotations, we believe, are potent ones.

Reversing the order in which they appear in the report, we refer first to what the committee said about Reformed Churches in our own vicinity.

> All truly Reformed Churches in our North American continent should, as a matter of scriptural, i. e. divine requirement, be confederated. Accordingly steps should be taken, in due order, to bring this imperative confederation about. These churches have no right in the sight of God to remain ecclesiastically divided. To prevail upon them to unite may be a stupendous task, but it should not be evaded and shirked by the Christian Reformed Church, since God in His grace has given it the conviction that this labor of love is its bounden duty. The least that can be done is to do what our hand now and here finds to do and to do it with all our might, in reliance upon God's grace and the operation of the Holy Spirit and in love to our brethren in Christ.

And what about non-Reformed churches?

> It is a mistake to think, as has been done, that Reformed churches, our own for instance, should concern themselves only with members of their own, that is, Reformed, family. If, as is generally assumed, the non-Reformed churches, whether Protestant or non-Protestant, are Christian churches indeed, even though they are defective enough, then surely the Christian Reformed Church, for one, should make it its business to labor with them in love in order to help them, by the blessing of God, to attain a more scriptural character. It cannot properly be adjudged presumptuous to do so. It would be clear evidence of the influence of the Spirit of Christ to undertake the task spoken of. The ideal may seem incapable of realization, and the program involved may be deemed highly ambitious. Let us suppose that the plan is idealistic and that the task envisaged is arduous; the determining factor is the consideration that it is the good and acceptable and perfect will of God to gain and keep our ecclesiastical brethren in the measure in which it is possible for us to do so. The prospect of success or failure has nothing to do with the duty of the Christian Reformed Church to "gain its erring brethen."

We do not intend, of course, to let this problem get out of focus. We subscribe to a statement found in the Spring Bulletin of the Mission House Theological Seminary:

> The problem of the nature of the Church is often strangely twisted. It is often presented in such a way as though it were possible to know the nature of the Church only by analyzing its structure or improving on it. However, to know Christ is to know the Church. This tenet cannot be reversed as though to know the Church were to know Christ. Jesus Christ is not only made unto us "wisdom from God, and righteousness and sanctification and redemption." He is also made unto us the ordering of our life in society. He is our order in the society of the Church. It is a fine and commendable thing to work for the goal, "that they may all be one." But Jesus' prayer goes on, "Even as thou, Father, art in me and I in thee, that they also may be in us." There is no unity among believers without knowledge of the Father and the Son. Would it not be self-delusion to assume that all church members today really know the Father and the Son and what it means to be *in them?* Might not the disunity of the Church stem from a poor knowledge of the Father and Son?

This above all is to be remembered. It does not in any way dim a proper enthusiasm for the unity of the Church. But it certainly gives guidance, a guidance not to be ignored, in the pursuit of that unity.

WE COULD go on at great length on this subje but we must bring these reflections to a cl for the present. Why have we written on this su ject? Have we not enough internal problems which our attention could be given? Indeed we ha But this subject was chosen deliberately. In t first place, the internal problems themselves a best seen when seen in perspective. In the seco place, it would be wrong to become so absorbed in i ternal discussions that the real task would be i nored. This would be dereliction of duty, and practical consequences would soon be felt.

It is in such a setting that we are summoned ane to our task. However great our responsibiliti thus appear, they at least assure us that what are doing is important. These are the proble which other Christian communities share with u Though we see them from the standpoint of R formed orthodoxy, they are not merely the intern problems of Reformed theology. They are the pro lems confronted by Christ's Church, gathered out the whole human race by His Spirit and Word, which we believe that we are and forever shall r main living members. To study that past so th we may understand the present; to stand firm the rock so that we may help others; to believe, order that we may know; this is our task.

The Dutch Calvinist Labor Movement, 1870 - 1910

by Dirk W. Jellema

THE QUESTION of whether separate organization in the field of labor is necessary on "principial" grounds has agitated our circles for a number of years. Some, including the CLA leadership, have said that principle demanded separate organization.[1] Others have denied this. Now, it has been *assumed* on both sides of the argument that the example of Dutch Calvinism supports those who feel separate organization to be principially necessary. The Dutch Calvinist labor movement, it seems *assumed* by all, has always held that separate organization is principially necessary. Is this assumption correct? Suppose we examine the Dutch Calvinist labor mov ment and its history.

THE YEARS between 1870 and 1910, two gener tions, were the years in which the Dutch labo movement — whether Calvinist, Socialist, Libera or whatever — took shape. Some general remark on *all* Dutch labor movements might be made her

First: the first twenty years (1870-1890) shou be distinguished from the second (1890-1910 During the first twenty years, the organization form was the labor *association;* during the secon twenty years there was a transition to the labo *union.* An *association* did not bargain; its aim were to influence legislation, set up pension fund propagandize for an ideology, improve the soci status of the worker, and such things. It was o

1. The CLA, since its inception twenty years ago, has stressed the "principial" justification for separate organization. The pamphlet *Pioneering Towards a Christian Society* (still available from the CLA, and published under its imprint), which suggests a justification on the basis of a Christian *program* rather than on principial reasons, represented the thinking of the short-lived CLA Expansion Committee rather than that of the CLA leadership.

nized geographically; *all* Amsterdam workers, regardless of their trade, would be in the Amsterdam tion of a given association. A *union,* on the ier hand, had bargaining and contracts as a main jective, and was usually organized by *trade;* all rpenters in Friesland, for example, would be in e group.

Second: the labor associations (1870-1890), ether Calvinist, Liberal, or Socialist, tended to be opian ("impractical"), and to stress a dream ther than a practical program. All of them, ound 1890, began to face the problem of getting actical *action*; and, generally, a transition to the oor *union* was adopted as one way of doing this.

Third: in the Netherlands, by 1870, political parts were *ideological parties,* each standing for a litical ideology. And the labor associations tend- to be the same. In the USA, from a Dutch point view, both parties hold the same *ideology* (demratic, anti-Communist, etc.) and so do both labor ovements (AFL and CIO). In the Netherlands, rongly influenced by the French Revolution, there ere *radically different ideologies* which gave birth political parties, labor movements, and the like. hus, in the Netherlands, the *idea* of an ideological- neutral labor union was difficult enough; and the tablishment of an *actual* neutral union even more . This should be borne in mind when considering ie calvinist attitudes described below.

PRACTICALLY speaking, the story of the Dutch labor movement begins around 1870. In 1871 me scattered workers' groups which had been rmed in the decade before, and various individuals, formed the ANWV (Algemeen Nederlands Verkliedenverbond). This was a labor *association,* ith rather vague and Utopian aims, notably that f improving the social status of the working class. ts leadership was largely Liberal. It proclaimed leological neutrality; it was a neutral association. Many Calvinist workers joined. Within four years, he ANWV had some 5,000 members. That was its igh point for many years.

Klaas Kater, one of the leading Calvinist members, and the future leader of the Calvinist labor association (Patrimonium), tried to organize a *neutral* organization along trade lines in the building rades; this proved abortive (1873). In 1874, Kater lefended the ideal of neutral organization against Beeremans, who wanted a separate Christian organization; Kater feared that a separate organization would produce "useless theologizing." But in 1875 the Liberal leadership of the ANWV made it impossible for Kater and other Calvinists to remain. The Liberals proposed, and passed, a resolution favoring the Liberal Party's stand on education (i.e., against Christian schools). The ANWV had shown that it was no longer neutral. Kater left.[2]

Kater at the time was working for W. Hovy, a noted Calvinist, who was later active in the Antirevolutionary Party, the Free University Board of Trustees, the Christian Employers' Association, and the like. Hovy was a brewer. It was in his Crowned Falcon brewery in Amsterdam that Kater, Poesiat, and a handful of others started a Calvinist labor association, Patrimonium. Hovy, who practiced profit-sharing, pension funds, and other "socialist" ideas in his brewery, favored Patrimonium wholeheartedly. Indeed, Patrimonium's rather Utopian outlook perhaps presupposed too much that all Christian employers would be like the good Amsterdam brewer.[3]

Patrimonium grew. By 1880, there were 1,000 members; by 1890, 7,500. The growth was largely due to Kater, who carried on despite repeated disappointments. He was helped by the appearance in 1881 of a left-of-Marx labor association, the SDB (Sociaal-Democratische Bond), led by the redoubtable Utopian Socialist Domela Nieuwenhuis.[4] Criticism of Kater's "socialism" toned down somewhat after 1881.

Patrimonium grew; but there was also increasing difficulty and disillusionment. Kater found that most Christian employers were not like Hovy the brewer; pension funds, they said, were "socialist nonsense." In the mid '80's, the Doleantie (in which Kuyper led thousands out of the state church, the Hervormde Kerk) resulted in a group of Hervormde workers forming a separate organization. And the Calvinist party — the Antirevolutionary Party — did not seem enthusiastic about labor legislation; "right-wingers" like Lohman and Mackay (rather than Kuyper) seemed to control policy.

By 1890, Kater was advocating cautious changes in outlook and program. He gave cautious approval to the right to strike under certain conditions (Kuyper had defended it as normal twenty years before). And he asked the Antirevolutionary Party to help arrange a Christian Social Congress. This met in 1891. The main speech was given by

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2. For Kater in 1873, see e.g. C. Smeenk, *Christelijke sociale beginselen* (Kampen, 1936), II: 50-52. Kater in 1902, as an old man, gave a speech in which he defended the Calvinists against the charge that they had made a powerful neutral movement impossible. We were forced out, he said; the ANWV abandoned neutrality. (See e.g., F. T. A. Wormser. *Een man uit en voor het volk,* Nijkerk, 1908, 165-168.)

3. Kater's program stressed pension funds and "Christian love" between employer and employee. Strikes were forbidden. On the other hand, the ANWV also forbade strikes; and so did the later left-of-Marx labor association, which after 1890 finally agreed to strikes for "principial" (ideological) ends. The small scale of most Dutch industry before 1890 probably also helped Utopian emphases in the labor associations.

4. Domela was a former Lutheran preacher. He later turned Anarchist. Domela admired Kuyper for his social thought: see our "Abraham Kuyper, Forgotten Radical?", *Calvin Forum,* May-July, 1950.

Kuyper, who called for far-reaching action along "Christian socialist" lines.[5]

Kater favored moving more slowly, but he began to face increasing opposition from a group within Patrimonium, who viewed his policy as too negative and cautious. P. van Vliet, leader of the Frisian Calvinistic workers, proposed support for far-reaching land reforms (land nationalization); other Frisian leaders advocated cooperation with the Friesche Volkspartij, dominated by Socialists. A. S. Talma and others demanded a positive program. But what form should action take? Legislative action; Kamers van Arbeid (somewhat like FDR's NRA); cooperatives? As the discussion went on, it became clear to more and more people that a labor-*union* type of organization would be a promising way towards more effective action. In the early '90's, indeed, some trade-union sections had been organized within Patrimonium, and their number was increasing.

We might note, in passing, that the same problems were agitating the other labor associations. The ANWV, after hesitating, made what turned out to be the wrong decision: it stayed simply a labor association. Domela's SDP, committed to a left-of-Marx ideology, hesitated also. Domela was skeptical of labor unions; they could not change the basic social structure of the Netherlands. But the SBD had some labor-union sections by 1892, and in 1893 these were organized into the NAS (Nationaal Arbeids-secretariaat), a confederation of left-of Marx labor unions. However, many were dissatisfied. Domela, feeling that the SDP was becoming too tame, soon broke with it, and turned to anarchism and syndicalism. Another group in the SDB, feeling that Domela's influence had turned the SDB far from orthodox Marxist paths, formed an orthodox-Marxist political party in 1894 (the SNDP), and many of the left-wing labor unions had ties with it other than with the SDB.

In 1894 also, the "right wing" elements left the Antirevolutionary Party, later combining to form the Christian Historical Party. The Antirevolutionary Party, now controlled by Kuyper, immediately stepped up its emphasis on social reforms and labor legislation, which Kuyper maintained were demanded by the principles of Calvinism. In the late '90's in Patrimonium, Talma and Van Vliet were rapidly gaining control, as against Kater and the "old guard," and the question of how best to organize labor *unions*, was definitely on the agenda.

SHOULD LABOR *unions* be organized on a neutral basis, or should they be separate organizations for each ideology? Klaas Kater, followed by many of Patrimonium's "old guard," favored a *separ* *association* (i.e., Patrimonium) as demanded circumstances, but supported a united *neutral un* Savornin Lohman, leader of the right-wing Calv ist Christian Historical Party, favored a uni *neutral union.* Abraham Kuyper, writing in *Standaard,* warned *against separate unions*: "a one who divides the workingmen where such e nomic interests are concerned, is strengthening power of the employer and weakening the wo man."[6]

But it was the position of Talma, emerging as recognized leader of Patrimonium, which won day. Talma had been influenced by Kuyper and English "Christian Socialism," and he was later sponsor a far-reaching program of social legis tion, denounced by Liberal opponents as "Ar revolutionary red socialism." Writing in 1899, T ma made the following points. General unio neutral unions, are ideal. In some countries, su as England, they are possible. In the Netherlan they are not, since existing federations (i.e., t NAS are controlled by Socialists. Separate orga ization is thus best in the Netherlands. But ev so, a Christian organization should cooperate clo up with Socialists and Anarchists in pursuit of t common interests of the various trades, against u just employers.[7]

In 1900, Patrimonium passed a Talma-sponsor resolution calling for a common secretariat for t scattered Calvinist unions; this was CAS (Chr telijk Arbeids-secretariaat). It grew rapidly. It c operated with Socialist unions in several strikes.

In 1903 occurred the great railroad strike, whi shattered this cooperation, and influenced the futu development of all segments of the Dutch lab movement. This "strike," actually, was two strike All during 1902 there had been growing unre among the two unions of railroad workers. In Ja uary, 1903, they struck. Kuyper, then prime-mi ister, did not interfere, despite pressure from t "right wing" of the Dutch Parliament. The em ployers capitulated. In February, a united unio was formed. It soon had 12,000 members. The NA and the orthodox-Marxist SDAP, and Domela's fo lowers, all began talking of a general strike wit political implications. Kuyper, feeling a gener transportation strike would endanger the nation welfare, introduced bills forbidding general strike

5. This speech is available in English as *Christianity and the Class Struggle* (Grand Rapids, 1950): paper-back copies, $1.00 each, can be had from the Young Calvinist Federation.

6. See, among others: A. J. C. Ruter, *De spoorwegstakin van* 1903 (Leiden, 1935), 163; J. M. Vellinga, *Talma's s ciale arbeid* (Hoorn, 1941), 29; J. Rullman, *Kuyper-bibli grafie* (Vol. III, Kampen, 1940), 363. Kuyper in 1902, aft separate unions had been organized, still said that a unite neutral union would have been the ideal, and that separa organization had been forced on the Calvinists; Ruter, 48

7. Vellinga, 29 ff.; cf. also C. Smeenk and P. van Vlie *Een held in volle wapenrusting* (Rotterdam, 1917), 69. Ta ma's articles appeared in Patrimonium's own paper, an convinced many that Kater's support of a neutral union wa impractical.

providing for government arbitration, and drafting any strikers. While this was being debated, the Socialist-dominated strike committee set a general transportation strike for April 6. It fizzled out, and a week later Kuyper's bills became law.

This second strike had important effects. Domela (whose advice had been disregarded) gained adherents for his left-of-Marx position among formerly Marxist workers. The SDAP was temporarily hurt. The NAS was badly hurt. Calvinist and Catholic unions (the latter soon to set up a secretariat of their own) gained members by the thousands. Talma and the CAS had to face renewed right-wing Calvinist opposition for having cooperated in the past with the NAS. Socialists (SDAP), Liberals, and others united on the demand that "Kuyper must go," and in the bitter 1905 election he was ousted.[8]

In 1905, the CAS severed its ties with Patrimonium, and in 1909 a more centralized organization was set up, the CNV (Christelijk National Vakverbond), which today has over 165,000 members. The Catholic unions formed first a secretariat and, in 1909, a central organization (RKV, now KAB) which today has some 300,000 members. The CNV was at first inter-confessional (i.e., included Catholics), but this was, after much soul-searching, rejected by the Catholics. Meanwhile, in 1906, the left-wing unions regrouped. The discredited NAS was soon replaced by the 1906-founded NVV, whose leadership was orthodox-Marxist or Marxist-"laborite." It has around 400,000 members today.[9]

By 1910, then, instead of the old labor *associations,* labor *unions* were the dominant form of organization. In 1910, Calvinist and Catholic unions included about 22 percent of organized workers; today, about 43 percent.[10] The years immediately after 1910 were marked by Talma's social legislation (1910-1914); and then came the War. By 1920, Kuyper and Talma were dead, and the old problems were settled, and the old fire began to die out among the Calvinists. "Antirevolutionary red socialism" was replaced by the intelligent conservation of Colijn. The later history of the CNV lies beyond the scope of this article.

It appears, then, that a consideration of the history of the Dutch Calvinist labor movement gives no support to the assumption, frequently made, that Dutch Calvinism deemed separate labor organizations "principially necessary." It appears, further, that such a consideration shows that the opponents of "principially necessary separate organizations" in labor are closer to the Dutch Calvinist tradition than are the supporters of "principially necessary separate organizations" in labor.

8. Talma was opposed in an intelligent manner by Sikkel, who wanted a Calvinist version of the corporative state favored by many Catholic writers. Most of the opposition was less sensible, and of the "where there's smoke . . ." type.

9. M. Ruppert, *De Nederlandse vakbeweging,* (Haarlem, 1953), 215 ff. for these figures.
10. *Ibid.*

The Militant Mind (III)

By Henry Stob

To a man standing in the perspective of militancy the world appears in the shape of a Threat. It looms up before him as an Enemy. Yet it does not put him to flight. He fears the world, but he does not flee it. He attacks it. What some men unguardedly embrace, what others flee, what still others attempt critically to evaluate and redeem, he resists and fights.

The militant man not merely fights the world, he fights it ardently, with great energy and zeal. He does this not because he enjoys a fight, but because he is powerfully motivated; he has very strong beliefs about the nature of the world and the duty of the Church respecting it. If he is restless, if he strains impatiently at the leash, if he conducts himself as a man on an urgent mission, this is because he is driven forward by deep and dynamic convictions. If he pursues with conspicuous boldness the course he has adopted, this is because scepticism has no hold upon him; he is not a man to question or to doubt the fundamental rightness of his course. He has very deep convictions concerning the legitimacy and necessity of what he is about. He is confident that the anti-worldly stance he has assumed is both demanded by the existential situation and enjoined by Scripture. He is convinced that his outlook and behaviour is established, not upon mere temperament, but upon the ultimate realities as these are disclosed in Christian doctrine.

This orientation to basic doctrine is a very marked feature of the militant spirit. There is perhaps nothing, save its warlike posture and thrust itself, which is so characteristic of militancy as the claim it makes to the support of sound teaching.

Militancy is not satisfied, as Safety is, to justify itself prudentially. It wants theological validation, and is sure that it has it. It feels itself upborn and justified by truth itself. And this feeling it does not hesitate to communicate. It is constantly pointing to what it regards as its firm dogmatic foundations.

This constant pointing has two interesting and closely related effects. In the first place because of its doctrinal self-consciousness and its lively preoccupation with its theological basis, militancy tends to acquire, both in fact and in the view of those who observe it, a theoretical cast. It becomes a doctrine as much as a practice, a dogma as much as a mood, a creed as much as a program. This is not in itself a defect, nor is it a fact of crucial significance, but it does make plain why anyone who wishes to describe the militant attitude is bound to discuss theology.

In the second place, because of militancy's steady appeal to dogma, the militant attitude and the theology constructed to support it, although they are not really identical, tend in the existential situation to become so. They tend to merge and coalesce, with the result that the advocacy of one entails the advocacy of the other, and the rejection of one entails the rejection of the other. This is why the people who, in the current situation, wish the Church to be more militant than it is, are urging it to amend its theology and bring it into agreement with their own. And this is why these same people, when contemplating their fellows, take the absence of militancy as signifying an absence, if not of theological competence or sensitivity, then certainly of theological correctness. On the other hand, and by the same token, those who disparage militancy do so because they consider that in the form in which it currently presents itself it reflects the defects of the theology that underlies it. These people are disposed to trace the militant behavior of their fellows, in part at least, to faulty doctrine.

This being so, it is evident that the problem of militancy cannot be understood, not to say resolved, unless one looks to its foundations. For the proper appraisal of militancy it is necessary to consider the underlying creed which supports and engenders it.

I have already in the course of these articles given some consideration to this creed. I have suggested that it is at important points simplistic, bearing upon itself the marks of reductionistic thinking. I cited in illustration its account of the antithesis and its treatment of God's moral attributes. It is my purpose now to let pass in quick review other articles in the militant creed which are similarly simplistic. The survey will indicate, I think, that militancy is based upon doctrines which, fashioned within a perspective alien to Scripture, are unable to sustain a truly Christian outlook.

The dogmatic theologian who yields to the influence of the militant mind may be expected to construct a theology which will support and encourage the attitude of militancy. In developing the doctrine of God he will avoid the extreme of representing God as nothing but a God of war, full of wrath and threatenings, but he will take care, nevertheless, to insure that in his representations God the Avenger is drawn on the same scale as God the Savior, and he will be at pains to see that God's wrath is placed on an equal footing with His love. He will put as much emphasis upon God's destructive activities as upon his saving work, and he will not fail to declare that God's judgment of doom discloses His nature and purpose as directly as His offer of grace.

One is therefore not surprised to find lodged in the militant creed a simplistic Doctrine of Predestination which completely obscures, if it does not actually deny, the important differences between the divine decree of Election and the divine decree of Reprobation. In accordance with the reductionistic tendencies of all militant thought the two decrees are viewed as united in the single plan of God. Within this plan, inside God's all-embracing counsel, their differences go out of sight and they come to be treated as equal and coordinate.

The Bible, however, does not countenance such treatment. It teaches not only that the relation of election to salvation is quite different than the relation of reprobation to damnation, but also that these two decrees quite unequally reflect the mind and heart of God. The Bible knows nothing of the balanced proportionalism of the militant creed. It places God's destructive work behind and to the left of His saving purposes. It sets His judgments in the defining context of His goodness. It distinguishes sharply between the negative attitudes of God, which are invoked by an historical Fall that He did not cause, and the positive attitudes of God which flow eternally from His nature; and it refuses to coordinate the two.

The Church has made the same refusal. Because they are faithful to Scripture there is nothing in the Reformed Confessions to suggest the equal ultimacy of election and reprobation. The fathers of Dordt, indeed, went out of their way to repudiate the suggestion, declaring in the *Conclusions* to the *Canons*: ". . . some . . . have violated all truth, equity, and charity in wishing to persuade the public . . . that the doctrine of the Reformed Churches concerning predestination . . . teaches that God, by a mere arbitrary act of His will, without the least respect or view to any sin, has predestinated the greatest part of the world to eternal damnation, and has created them for this very purpose; [and] that in the same manner in which election is the fountain

nd cause of faith and good works, reprobation is ne cause of unbelief and impiety; . . . [this] the eformed Churches not only do not acknowledge nt even detest with their whole soul."

WHEN a man views the Christian life in the perspective of war and defines the Christian's relation to the world in terms of conflict, he will sooner or later have to give serious attention to the love commandment, for love is at bottom a constructive and not a destructive force, and not at home in war. It is true, of course, that love does not commit one to pacifism. In a sinful world, where tyrannous and destructive forces are abroad, love is in the service of justice and conservation, and necessarily in conflict with what imperils these. Yet it is not in conflict that it has its seat; it is not in destruction that its inner nature is revealed. Love is the bond of unity. It restores, heals, saves, and celebrates its triumph in fellowship and peace. In the measure, therefore, that love is taken seriously and given its rightful place as the comprehensive virtue, and as man's whole duty, the militant and the martial will have to retreat.

But militancy cannot retreat; it will not commit suicide. Militancy lives by, is defined by, the priority of the martial. The militant man cannot, without ceasing to be himself, acknowledge the supremacy of love. This being the case one would expect every Christian to abandon the attempt to construe existence in terms of conflict, for Christianity does not leave the status of love in doubt: love is the very fulfillment of the law. Yet there are Christians who continue to press the claims of militancy, and in the interest of their militancy they are forced to formulate a new, a militant doctrine of love, which in one or another way reduces love in scope and power.

1. The simplest and most direct way to reduce love is to deny that love is always and everywhere the Christian's duty in his relations with other men. One then asserts that Christians are permitted, if not obliged, to hate some men at certain times and under certain circumstances. I wish I could report that this position is merely a logically possible one, and that it is not actually occupied by any member of the Church, but I cannot. So powerful is the influence of the militant mind even on those who bear Christ's name that some seek to evade in this most radical of all ways Jesus' unmistakable commandment to love all men, always, and under every circumstance.

Christ meanwhile does not leave us in doubt about our duty. Nor do the Apostles (Matt. 5:43-45; 22:37-40; Luke 6:27; 23:34; Acts 7:60; Rom. 13:8, 9; Gal. 5:14; etc.). Nor indeed do the great teachers in the Church. In one of the earliest manuals of instruction, the *Didache,* one may read: "You shall not hate any man." Clement of Alexandria informs his readers that a Christian "hates none of God's creatures" (*Stromata,* VI, 9). Minucius Felix told the Romans of his day: ". . . we love one another . . . with a mutual love because we do not know how to hate" (*Octavius* 31). St. Augustine declared: ". . . he who lives according to God ought to cherish towards evil men a *perfect* hatred, so that he shall neither hate the man because of his vice, nor love the vice because of the man, but hate the vice and love the man" (*City of God,* XIV, 6). Calvin said: "Thus hatred and Christianity are things incompatible. I mean hatred towards persons — in opposition to the love that we owe them" (*Letter* DCLXIV, to the Duchess of Ferrara). And in commenting on Psalm 139:21, 22 Calvin remarked: "We are to observe . . . that the hatred of which the Psalmist speaks is directed to the sins rather than the persons of the wicked. We are, so far as lies in us, to study peace with all men; we are to seek the good of all, and, if possible, they are to be reclaimed by kindness and good offices" (*Commentary, loc. cit.*)

2. When militancy does not seek to justify itself by positively legitimatizing hate, it may seek to do so by negatively immobilizing love. This is done by developing a doctrine of stages and degrees of love, a doctrine in which the exercise of love is correlated with the historical process of differentiation within mankind. This doctrine requires that a Christian's love for an unbeliever be in inverse proportion to the unbeliever's unbelief. According to this doctrine, we are not required to love the Anti-Christ, the fully differentiated and completely self-conscious sinner. If, however, we are confronted by a less fully-differentiated sinner, him we must love — but only in the measure that he is undifferentiated. The more differentiated he is, the greater sinner he is, the less I am required to love him.

There can be no doubt that this ingenious doctrine, when believed, sustains and encourages militancy. But the doctrine is not taken from the Scripture; it flies into the face of it. I make no judgments now about the Anti-Christ, who is represented in the Bible as quite unique in any case, but I dare say that Christian love is meant in every other instance to be spent entire, without discrimination, upon all who cross our path. Who can set bounds to love?

3. When militancy does not justify itself by making hate legitimate, or by relatively immobilizing love, it does so by adopting another expedient. It does so by subordinating love to truth. Here is a very interesting application of the reductionist technique. Love and truth, which in the Scriptures always stand together in mutual embrace, are separated and then shifted onto different levels. By this device the road is cleared for the free advance of

hostility and strife. Truth is made loose from love, and she can now in perfect freedom pursue a loveless way. The claims of orthodoxy can now be pressed at morality's expense. Controversy can go on with no holds barred. When the theological issue is judged important, questions concerning polemical methods may be dismissed as being of no consequence. Ethics must give way to doctrine. What is important is the faith; love must beat a fast retreat in the face of truth's advance.

It would be possible to counter this quite unscriptural proposal by employing the reductionist technique in reverse and making love supreme and truth subordinate to it. A very plausible case could be made for this, seeing the apostle declares that prophesyings shall fail and that love is greater than either faith or hope. The fact is, however, that love is no more superior to truth than truth is to love. They are coordinate. Truth appears to be superior to love, for no one can love truly who does not stand within the truth. Yet love appears superior to truth in that truth cannot really be heard apart from love: only the sheep who love him can hear the master's voice. The fact is that love and truth mutually define each other. Because this is so each may be looked at through the prism of the other; but this does not justify subordination. Calvin, for example, may on one occasion say: ". . . charity itself ought to be subservient to the purity of the faith" (*Institutes,* III, 19, 13), yet on another occasion he may say: "Faith by itself cannot please God, since it cannot even exist without love to our neighbor" (*Commentary* on Hosea 6:6). Truth seems to be prior, for God can hardly be loved if He is not known, yet as Herman Bavinck says: "God is known in proportion to the extent that he is loved" (*Our Reasonable Faith,* p. 30). Love without truth is sentimental and indulgent; it is not Christian love at all. Likewise, truth without love is impossible there where truth counts for the most; for as G. F. Thomas says: ". . . religious truth can come only to him who is pure in heart" (*Christian Ethics and Moral Philosophy,* p. 476).

The militant man, it is obvious, tries in most ingenious ways to circumvent the love commandment, but he doesn't succeed in doing so. Love blocks the way. It is not possible to construct a biblical theology able to validate militancy; biblical love will refuse forever to become part of its supporting structure.

A man who is concerned to encourage true belief and to establish and defend sound doctrine can hardly avoid giving some attention to the complex question of Knowledge; and in seeking an answer to this question he will sooner or later develop a theory or doctrine of Truth. It will surprise no one, therefore, to discover that the militant man, who very much concerned with orthodoxy and right opi ion, has developed such a doctrine. It is not in a who practice militancy a clearly defined or consciou ly held doctrine; it is often no more than an a proach to the problem of truth and knowledge; y it is substantial enough to impart to the outlook ar practice of militancy a characteristic quality an direction.

1. One notable feature of militancy in the area truth and knowledge is what might be called i Dogmatism. Dogmatism is the habit of taking fo truth what is only opinion, of regarding as sure wha is still uncertain. The militant man tends to b Dogmatic; he tends to accept as established what actually in question. The reason is plain. What still in process of being identified, apprehended, an defined cannot be fought over with maximum forc and enthusiasm. When a man is still in search o truth, when an area of knowledge is still under in vestigation, when conviction is not yet formed, an when statements of belief are still tentative, a ma fights, if at all, to only a limited extent, perhap only to the extent necessary to safeguard his righ to explore. He is both too occupied with his ex plorations and too uncertain about the value of hi findings, to do more. To fight continuously, dogged ly, and effectually his convictions must be alread settled; he must regard himself as in pure posses sion of indubitable truth.

Now, because the true Christian is in possessio of some indubitable truth by virtue of an authorita tive divine disclosure, he is a man of conviction an he fights for his convictions. If he has no convic tions, or if he does not care to proclaim and defen them with all diligence, though in meekness and i fear (I Peter 3:15), then he is either no Christian o he is a Christian who grievously sins. But th Christian who stands sure in faith takes care not t transfer the mood of unshakable conviction ont territory where it is not appropriate, into area where he is only a learner. Considering the wide range of reality and truth, this territory is very large indeed: the areas in which he is still a relative stranger and in which the assertive and defensive mood ill befits him, are vast.

Even within the restricted area of theology he will move with modesty and caution, for even here there is ample room for honest and blameless differences of opinion, differences which for their resolution require not a battle but a discussion, not a fight but a conversation. There will be truths, however, and they will not be few, upon which the Christian will be required to stand unmovably. But even as he settles himself to defend these and turns his will against the opponents and detractors of truth, he will let ring in his ears the words of

ıe apostle: ". . . the servant of the Lord must ot strive; but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, atient, in meekness instructing those that oppose hemselves; if God peradventure will give them epentance to the acknowledging of truth" (II Tim. :24, 25).

2. Closely related to the dogmatism of militancy ı its inclination to depreciate the value of non-hristian insights into reality. This depreciation ı, indeed, a necessary preliminary step to opposing nd rejecting them. One does not oppose and fight alues. Convinced that he is obligated to fight the world, the militant man is under constant tempta-ion, therefore, to deny that truth and goodness and eauty have any residence there. He is tempted y the ever present spirit of reductionism to repre-ent the world simplistically, as altogether evil, nd therefore quite deserving of rejection.

He will find it hard, however, to make his repre-entation and denials stick, for the ordinary person bserves on all sides the contributions which the world has made to science, art, and general culture. The militant man will not be deterred by this fact. He will counter the objections of commonsense with theological analysis. In order to reinforce his judg-ment of condemnation he will go beyond the surface aspects of things; he will go below appearances, and point to the evil source of worldly culture. He will point to the depraved heart of unregenerate man, and ask whether anything good, anything true, anything beautiful can come out of a fountain so totally corrupt. He will, in other words, refer whatever appears to be good in worldly culture to a single evil source, and thus justify his judgment of rejection. He will interpret the very complex phenomenon of worldly culture simplistically, and fail to see that it contains not only what rises up out of the depraved heart of man but also what comes down from the white throne of God. He will fail to see, or fail adequately to take into account, the fact that even unregenerate culture is a mixture, a product of grace as well as of sin.

The fact is that the Christian is not permitted to fight unregenerate culture. He must discriminate. He may not view the world only in the perspective of the absolute antithesis. There is an absolute antithesis, although I should prefer to call it radical. This antithesis is, deep down, between the regenerate and the unregenerate heart, and it makes its presence felt in culture. But there is more than sin in the culture of the unregenerate; there is the common grace of God and His mercy to men in flight from Him. Because of this fact, obscured I fear in militancy, we may and indeed must take to ourselves many of the fruits of worldly effort. This will still leave us with much to oppose, for there is expressed in the worldling's work, not only God's grace, but also the sinner's opposition to the person and purposes of God. However, while we should not make ourselves guilty of adopting what we should oppose, we should also not oppose what we are required to appreciate and adopt, for we should be guilty then of opposing God himself.

"Whenever, therefore, we meet with heathen writers, let us learn from that light of truth which is admirably displayed in their works, that the human mind, fallen as it is, and corrupted from its integrity, is yet invested and adorned by God with excellent talents. If we believe that the Spirit of God is the only fountain of truth, we shall neither reject nor despise the truth itself, wherever it shall appear, unless we wish to insult the Spirit of God; for the gifts of the Spirit cannot be undervalued without offering contempt and reproach to the Spirit himself." (John Calvin, *Institutes*, Bk. II, Ch. 2, par. 15.)

REFORMATION DAY, 1957

"It is impossible for a man to be a Christian without having Christ: and if he has Christ, he possesses at the same time all that belongs to Christ. What gives peace to our consciences is this: by faith our sins are no longer ours, but Christ's, on whom God has laid them all; and on the other hand, all Christ's righteousness belongs to us, to whom God has given it. Christ lays his hand on us and we are healed. He casts his mantle over us, and we are sheltered; for he is the glorious Saviour, blessed for evermore."

—MARTIN LUTHER, *Resolutions.*

"Oh! how great and glorious a thing it is to have before one the Word of God! With that we may at all times feel joyous and secure; we need never be in want of consolation, for we see before us, in all its brightness, the pure and right way. He who loses sight of the Word of God, falls into despair; the voice of heaven no longer sustains him; he follows only the disorderly tendency of his heart, and of world vanity, which lead him on to his destruction."

"Heaven and earth, all the emperors, kings, and princes of the world, could not raise a fit dwelling-place for God; yet, in a weak human soul, that keeps his Word, he willingly resides. Isaiah calls heaven the Lord's seat, and earth his footstool; he does not call them his dwelling-place; when we seek after God, we shall find him with them that keep his Word. Christ says: 'If a man love me, he will keep my words, and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him.'"

—MARTIN LUTHER, *Table Talk*

BOOK REVIEW

GEREFORMEERD WAAROM? *by H. J. Spier.* 60 pp. Kampen: J. H. Kok. *Reviewed by JAMES DAANE, Minister, First Christian Reformed Church, Los Angeles.*

The question expressed in this title is literally an existential question. In recent years a number of State Churches of continental Europe have been disestablished. In 1945 the State Church of the Netherlands, the Hervormde Kerk, was freed from the governmental control imposed by Willem I in 1816, and it has adopted her own Church Order. Because of this governmental interference and its resultant toleration of liberalism within the Church, the Gereformeerde Kerken seceded from the State Church in 1837. But it has now also been decided that the freed Hervormde Kerk will in 1961 consider the matter of exercising church discipline. This development poses the question whether the Gereformeerde Kerken still have, or will continue to have, good reasons for continuing to exist as separate churches. These new circumstances recall Kuyper's contention that separation from the Hervormde Kerk was to be only a temporary separation. Clergyman Spier, sensitive to the significance of this new turn of events, courageously faces this very existential question. Can the continued separate existence of the Gereformeerde Kerken of which he is member and minister, be justified? Hence the title of the book; hence the book.

There is another series of contemporary events which thrusts this question upon the attention of Spier. It is the Ecumenical Movement and the emergence of the World Council of Churches. How this is pertinent to the question he has raised is not clear, yet for Spier these events raise the question whether the Gereformeerde Kerken have a right to continue their separate way, or should look again to the ground of their existence.

Since life is precious, to be or not to be is always a delicate question. It is to Spier's credit, therefore, that he is happy with the turn of events in the Hervormde Kerk. He also reveals the Spirit of Christ when he admits to a sympathetic understanding of the fact that many leaders within the Gereformeerde Kerken are strongly in favor of affiliation with the World Council. He points out that any truly Reformed man takes seriously the biblical teaching that Jesus Christ has but one world-wide Church. Yet, although he can sympathetically appreciate the desire for affiliation, he himself is not ready to make the final decision.

As of today, Spier believes there is valid reason for the existence of the Gereformeerde Kerken. The validation lies in the fact that until now both the Hervormde Kerk and the World Council, although officially creedally orthodox, in practice tolerate theological liberalism. Not that uniformity on all matters is to be expected or demanded. He frankly admits to diversity within the Gereformeerde Kerken on Sabbath observance, worldly amusements, and on the evaluation of non-Christian science and art. But he insists — and rightly — that in the area of ecumenics there must be an unambiguous acceptance of the redemptive gospel of God concerning his Son, Jesus Christ. As long as this does not displace the ambiguous situation of an official orthodoxy which tolerates unorthodoxy on fundamental truths in both the Hervormde Kerk and the World Council, the Gereformeerde Kerken are justified in prolonging their separate existence. But should the Hervormde Kerk in 1961 decide to discipline liberals, then the continuance of separate existence would be quite another matter. Or, should the World Council insist that its member churches give the Council's creed that Jesus is God and Saviour its natural, classical meaning, then it would be quite wrong for the Gereformeerde Kerken to remain outsi the World Council.

Spier's method of answering his qu tion seems to me to be a bit confusin He justifies the existence of a Reform Church of whatever kind by an appe to the errors of the Roman Cathol Church of the sixteenth century and its refusal to be reformed as evidenc by its ejection of Luther. Yet Luth was not Reformed (Hervormd Gereformeed) but "Lutheran," and a justification of any Reformed Chur would have to be a justification al with reference to the Lutheran Churc It is too simple and therefore confusi to justify the Hervormde Kerk by reference to the errors of the Roma Catholic Church, and the Gereformeerd Kerken by a reference to the errors the Hervormde Kerk. Such straig line justification by-passes some of t relevant facts. Nor can I detect a direct connection between his ver existential question about the Ger formeerde Kerken and his comments the World Council. If, through th exercise of discipline the Hervorm Kerk would expel all true liberals, the would presumably be no good reas for the continued separate existence the Gereformeerde Kerken. But su pose the World Council should d likewise, would this in any sense provi an answer to the question whether th Gereformeerde Kerken have any vali reason for continued separate existence The existence of other than Reforme churches within and without the Worl Council would still raise and leave u answered the question: Gereformee Waarom?

The book reveals that the author ha a fine Christian sensitivity and attitud toward the oneness of the Church Christ. While I fear that his spir

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better than his argument regarding e basic issue, he reveals at other vels, a laudatory courage and percep- reness of mind. He calls by name asons, given both within and outside e Gereformeerde Kerken, that are not asons for being Gereformeerd.

His first chapter is entitled: Gere- rmeerd Waarom Niet? The Gere- rmeerde Kerken do not exist because e membership desires a separate urch for themselves, churches which e better than other churches. Such reason, Spier says, would be an xpression of pride born of the devil and ould provide good reason for being alled Pharisaical. At this juncture pier warns Reformed people to be very autious with the claim that Reformed hurches are the purest manifestation f the Body of Christ. The Church of hrist, he says, is as much manifested n the love, prayers, and Christian con- uct of her members, as in her creedal rthodoxy. He reminds us that our ord once said to the churches of Asia Minor, "I know thy works." Only he Lord knows where his Church is nost purely manifested. For all we know, warns Spier, a Negro church in Nigeria with very primitive creed, but great zeal and love for her Lord, may be the purest manifestation of the Church of Christ on earth.

Nor may we be happy that we have our own, separate churches. That we must speak of a Reformed Church, of a Lutheran Church, *et cetera* (and *et cetera*!) is a cause for grief. Pentecost, says Spier, bespoke a World Church in which the unreconciled disunities of men of all nations and tongues were healed by the power of the Holy Spirit. A divided Church was not on the pro- gram of the Holy Spirit. The factor which accounts for our ecclesiastical disunities can bear, asserts Spier, no other designation than human sin, which, within the Church, is the Church's sin. Such Christian courage and humble confession has come to be refreshing. It gives hope of a cleansed Reformed Church.

It is also said to be an error for Reformed Churches to think that they ought to throw the spotlight on "Re- formed" rather than on "Christian." Such an order of value does violence to the order of the Holy Spirit. The spotlight must, says Spier, always fall on what is most distinctive of the Church of Christ, not on what is most distinc- tive of a denomination. We are urged not to develop such a cult of reverence for "Reformed" that we create the im- pression that it is worse to be "un- Reformed" than "non-Christian." As if being merely Christian were but a jaded substitute for the genuine article! He further urges that it is quite non- sensical to speak of "Reformed truth." Spier asks, What kind of truth is that? Is there also a Reformed Christ, a Reformed Bible? I know, he confesses, but one truth: Jesus Christ and his Word. (While we have become accus- tomed to "Reformed truth" and "Re- formed Faith," and "Protestant Re- formed truth," the practice seems not to have arisen among others to speak of the "Baptist truth," the "Methodist Faith," or the "Pentecostal truth.") The truth, declares Spier with emphasis, is far greater than to allow any Reformed man to think that he has the truth and secret of divine revelation so embodied in his system of faith that he can preside over it, and arrange and re- arrange it as one re-arranges furniture in a room. Let us guard against illu- sion.

The legitimate meaning of the term "Reformed" derives from the historic event of the Reformation. Does the word mean one's own separate church, purer than others? Does it mean that a group of people may secede and set up their own church, if only they are convinced that their church will be purer than others? Not at all. On the contrary, the very idea of "Reforma- tion," to which both Luther and Calvin subscribed, is that of re-forming the one and only Church of Christ. The whole idea that a group of people or churches may leave a given church if only they are assured that the separate church they will set up will be purer than the church of their leaving, is wholly repulsive to the thought of the Reformers, who sought merely to reform the one and only Church of Christ and give it a new *gestalt*. The Reformers did not surrender their cause to the notion that any and every church has a right to exist!

To those able to read the language, I heartily recommend this fine little book. 'Twere good if a book of this kind were available in English. So radiant with the Christian spirit, this book would provide Reformed people in America with better answers than they frequently possess to the questions, Why Christian Reformed? or, Why Reformed Church of America? It would also give an intelligent and winsome explanation to the National Council of Churches in America and to the World Council of Churches for the hestitancy of some Reformed Churches to affiliate with these ecumen- ical organizations. The book would also explode some of the pseudo-reasons so frequently given for being Reformed, by showing how inconsistent they are with Scripture. Until these are recog- nized for what they are, self-examination will be but a re-arrangement of our prejudices, and progress in ecumen- ical understanding will be impossible.

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LETTERS TO THE JOURNAL

SIRS:

Last month's review by Dr. Bratt of Harbison's *The Christian Scholar in the Age of the Reformation* reminded me of something that I felt especially Christian Reformed readers of the *Journal*, who are about to celebrate Reformation Day in their centennial year, would be interested in hearing about.

Last Spring there was published *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament*, by Arndt and Gingrich. Most of our ministers learned to use the standard lexicon of Thayer during their studies at the seminary; the new volume recently published is the successor to works like Thayer's. It is a work representing great scholarship, and is of unusual importance for the entire English-speaking theological world.

Now *Journal* readers may not be interested in the new volume itself, but they will be interested, I am sure, in the short announcement tucked away on the back of its title page: "This publication has been made possible by funds allocated from the Centennial Thankoffering of the Lutheran Church — Missouri Synod, through its committee on Developing Scholarly Research." This bit of information is arresting. The gesture of which it speaks is a remarkable tribute to the movement started in 1517 by Martin Luther, paid 440 years after by his most loyal disciples. If in many quarters the Lutheran Church — Missouri Synod has been "notorious" for its orthodoxy, by now it has also become famous, in the same places, for its patronage of scholarship, and of scholarship which is pre-eminently of more than local and intramural appeal. One member of the donating Lutheran denomination has spoken of the new publication as "certainly one of the most significant ecumenical gestures ever to be made by our church. We could hardly have spelled out our allegiance to *sola Scriptura* more eloquently before men than in this way." And neither is there a much more eloquent way of acknowledging that the new devotion which inspired the Reformation went hand in hand with a new learning, and that a Reformation church today which proposes to choose between piety and scholarship is moribund already.

I believe we cannot tell ourselves too often that a Reformed church in her centennial year is doing more than playing a game at her birthday party when she assesses her duties with respect to scholarship and commits herself to them. In that assessing and committing she is engaged in a matter of life and death. And it appears that if she hopes one day to celebrate a happy bicentennial birthday as a *Reformed* Church, she must "agonizingly" reappraise her understanding and correct her misunderstanding of scholarship.

We may clearly be grateful for the plans being made in the present centennial year for a new college and a new seminary, and take courage at the response present in the centennial thank-offerings. But is it as clear how we can regard those plans and that response as the unequivocal pledge of Christian Reformed people to encourage the kind of inquiry without which students and scholars simply cannot live? Can the free and fearless inquiry of the Christian scholar thrive when his pretended patrons are incomprehensibly afraid of it, or when they presume to be his final critics? Are the conditions for *Christian* scholarhip possible where "academic freedom," rather than being promoted out of confidence in the Divine Word and its Author, is disputed out of suspicion that He might contradict Himself in His revelations? Do scholars intent on keeping stance in the *Reformation* tradition — that is, intent on working in, with, and under the Divine Word — have a fighting chance, when the authority and truth of that Word are once more identified with the prestige and opinions of men? Or is that chance worth taking at all, when the assumption seems to be that scholarship in general is a quite dispensable luxury, and that Christian scholarship in particular has little m to do than corroborate in footnotes w theologians believe on instinct? a word, are we ready to suffer embarrassment of taking seriously c selves the kind of scholarship wh Harbison has described as being hist ically Christian, and to support it only by gift, but by full confidence a earnest prayer?

Finally, I should like to refer *Jour* readers, for Reformation Day readi to the most provocative article Father Weigel, "American Catho Intellectualism — A Theologia Reflections," in the July, 1957 numb of *The Review of Politics*. What has to say makes sense beyond t precincts of Rome.

F. VAN HALSEMA

SIRS:

I am sending this letter to repla the article sent to you some months ag which was rejected because of length of about five columns in yo paper. In view of the fact that duri a period of about eight months y published three long articles by L George Stob and Mr. Lester DeKost — altogether some 44 columns — *against* separate Christian organiz tions, and thus against the CLA, su a refusal appears to me to be rath a weak application of Christian ethic

There are some comments which wish to make. I greatly deplore t position taken by George Stob concer ing the task of the Church in givi guidance to its members and guardi its purity. Of course, the Church mu preach the Word and thus instruct. B is such preaching through individu ministers enough, especially when que tions arise that are of importance t the Church as a whole and on whic there are differences of opinion? believe that then the Church must giv guidance, take a position that clear reflects the will of God, and then insi upon adherence to it. My grievanc especially is this: that in our Churc decisions of Synod pertaining to preac ing of the antithesis, the establishmen of Christian organizations, and the d mand that its members separate fro organizations that persist in unchristia practices, are almost entirely ignored And nothing is done about it. Th same is true also of other decision touching the Christian life.

Dr. Stob knows that that is true an does not approve. However, instea of insisting on strict observance h would rescind all such decisions an leave it to the individual's conscience t decide what is right and wrong. Bu conscience is susceptible to many in

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luences and Scripture can be variously interpreted, and thus in matters of conduct — outside of very gross public sins — the Church would soon lose its hold on its members. Rev. L. Van Laar, in his plan for a Labor Institute would still exact a pledge of loyalty to the Word of God and a promise to be bound by the decisions of the Institute's Council, but Dr. Stob would not impose such strictures. It would be wonderful indeed if the membership of the Church had attained such a high level of spirituality that rules and restrictions, solemn declarations and pledges, and discipline, would not be necessary. But that is not the case, nor will it ever be so in this sinful world.

I must also correct the erroneous impression given by George Stob that the CLA made attempts to establish a labor policy for Calvin College buildings that would disqualify laborers affiliated with the AFL or CIO. That is simply not true. We are fully aware of this misrepresentation of the CLA's position and you owe it to us to correct it. *This is what the CLA sought, and this only*: a policy whereby no one would be barred from bidding or working on a job of an institution supported by funds contributed by Christian people because of either membership or non-membership in any labor organization. That included the CLA. In other words, the CLA's position is that on such projects AFL, CIO and CLA members, and workers who are not members of any union, should all be allowed to work without any discrimination. The CLA never tried to make such jobs exclusively CLA. It opposed, *and will continue to oppose*, an AFL closed-shop policy on such buildings, which would bar from employment on them many who contribute of their money to such institutions. What could be fairer than the CLA-proposed policy?

Dr. Stob also complains about attempts to declare membership in the AFL or CIO unchristian. But, a little later in the same article he writes: "I consider, indeed, that a third major labor union, which appeals to all American workingmen, and which endeavors to promote the cause of economic justice and health, is pre-eminently desirable in view of the corruption and perversion of power into which the CIO and AFL have fallen." [*Reformed Journal*, Feb. 1957]. Dr. Stob finally admits that which thousands of workers have known for decades. Christian workers have long ago seen the futility of trying to reform those organizations. Now, in view of that admission of Dr. Stob, is membership in such organizations permissible or not? The Church has officially said that membership in organizations that are guilty of unchristian practices is *not* compatible with membership in the Church of Christ.

Allow me a final comment on Dr. Stob's writings. He states that he has no objection to a Christian labor association "provided that 'Christian' be understood in the broad sense as representing universal principles of justice which, because of the Christian influence and tradition, may be said to be dominant in Western society." That statement confirms what I have suspected for some time. It is this: that Dr. Stob and others equate universally accepted moral and ethical principles with Christianity. In this connection I would seriously suggest that the Christian Reformed Church either reformulate its position on the meaning of common grace or add a new "point" that will make it abundantly clear that the universal moral good which is recognized as a result of common grace can never be equated with the Christian life that must in its consecration to the Lord rise above the moral good of the unbeliever.

I would like to make a few comments on the writings of Mr. DeKoster also. I've read his Pathway treatise *All Ye That Labor* with admiration and great satisfaction. His criticism of Communism and his presentation of orthodox Christianity as the only answer also to social-economic problems is masterful. I thrilled to such statements as these: "He [the Christian] is under the mandate of his Lord, stimulated by the preaching of the Word of God, to bring all things, starting with his own life, and including the world of economics, into subjection unto Him" (p. 60). "As I have suggested before, the foundation of Christian social criticism is the Word of God revealed in the Scriptures and supplemented by the laws of creation. Basic to the Christian approach to social relations is the fact of the resurrection of Christ" (p. 116). "Christianity in economics means that under the guidance and stimulus of living Christian doctrine, taught from a vital Christian pulpit, press, and by dedicated example, more and more men and women shall join those who now seek to integrate their Christian confession and their economic lives" (p. 119). All these quotations and the entire booklet in fact constitute a strong argument for a Christian labor movement. DeKoster, if consistent, would be a strong CLA man!

But he is not. When one reads his article in the May, 1957, issue of the *Journal* on the question, "Is Separate Christian Organization Mandatory?", it is hard to believe that it is the same man speaking who wrote the Pathway booklet. How terribly disappointing! It is not up to me to defend Mr. Runner. Nevertheless I do wish to make a few remarks. The same arguments which DeKoster uses to prove that separate Christian organizations are not mandatory may also be used to prove that Christian schools are not mandatory. DeKoster also fails to hold the line of separation established after the fall, and by doing so practically denies the antithesis. I know of no dispute about the question of total separation from the unbelievers. No one teaches that. But this is disputed: that we, who are committed to the task, as DeKoster puts it "to bring all things . . . into subjection unto Him" may join with unbelievers in a broad social program that has no such purpose and which, because of its "neutral" policy of rejecting commitment to any religious doctrine, in practice follows humanistic moral and ethical principles which constitute the Christian philosophy of the liberals.

That is the issue. "Neutrality" is not merely toleration. It is in essence commitment to liberalism, the perverted Christianity that is a much greater danger to the orthodox Christian program than is Communism, in America.

Why does not DeKoster, who so masterfully defended orthodox Christianity against Communism, and who in the April, 1957, issue of the *Journal*, in an article under the title, "World Unbent," with equal clear insight proves that liberalism is not the answer to Communism, see that since both are enemies of orthodox Christianity, the application of the doctrines of orthodox Christianity cannot be accomplished through organizations that are in philosophy and practice committed to liberalism, although, of course, not so stated in their constitutions?

One more quotation from DeKoster's Pathway booklet: "The power of Chris-

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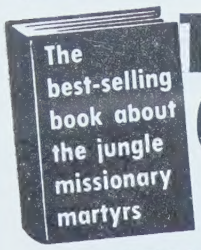

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tianity as a social force for righteousness, also in the world of economics, resides in the truth of Christianity as a doctrine. The Church mumbles in the councils of the nations today because it has lost touch with the sovereign power and truth of the Scriptures, and the living Christ revealed in them" (p. 66). Just so Christians will mumble in neutral organizations. Because orthodox Christianity as a doctrine cannot be taught and applied in them.

JOSEPH GRITTER
Secretary CLA

SIRS:

The other day someone stated (Dr. Solomon Barkin, Director of Research of the Textile Workers of America, addressing a group of business executives) that the staffs of our universities are so underpaid that the faculty members are unable to spend time traveling or thinking for gathering wisdom: they are forced to use the time to make both ends meet at home. This is certainly not the case with Dr. John T. Daling, who in your May 1957 issue presents a most interesting article: "A Look at the Dutch." May I present some comment and questions?

The article is very informative. It gives the reader a view of some economic, political, and religious thinking in the Netherlands. But since Dr. Daling made a tour of Europe, would he please also relate his observations in other countries? Certainly other readers too will be eager to read his observations from Scandinavia to Spain.

In "A Look at the Dutch" we find a valuable analysis of practical life and situations. Dr. Daling expresses this analysis concisely and tersely, and at times so tersely that (to me) the meaning is not quite clear.

1. What, for instance, does Dr. Daling mean with the "tightness" of the country's economy? Is it the monetary system? Wage controls? Price stabilization? Job regulation? Credit controls?

2. "The East Indies had for the Dutch been a veritable gold mine." This correct analytic statement comprises volumes of writing; it covers over three hundred years of a colonial system that left the colonized population in 1949 for more than ninety per cent illiterate. From here Dr. Daling discusses how the Dutch may compensate the Netherlands for the loss of this gold mine. Is there no loss to be compensated for *outside* of the Netherlands? Does colonization create no obligation or responsibility on the part of the colonists, not even the Reformed colonists?

(See S. I. Hazewinkel, *Brandende Koloniale Vraagstukken*, Hollandia Drukkery, Baarn, Holland, 1917. On p. 3: "It seems that in Holland one does not take into account the obligations which the Netherlands East Indies impose upon us." On p. 43: "In Java we shall go bankrupt. . . . The native shall be the prosecutor, and say: having taken advantage of my ignorance, thou hast denied me that which I was rightly entitled to, and thou hast taken away from me that which thou wert *not* entitled to. The latter I can forgive, but the withholding of that which thou shouldst have given, that I charge thee with. I declare thee to be in a state of colonial bankruptcy." [my translation, JI.] See also: "Indonesia: Islands of beauty and turmoil," in the *Reader's Digest*, Sept. 1955, p. 30. Also: The Schacht Report on Indonesia, Bulletin No. 180, March 21, 1952, by the American Indonesian Chamber of Commerce, 120 Wall Street, New York 5, N. Y.)

3. "Class consciousness pervades the Dutch system." The article gives the impression that only few people realize this very important fact. Should it not be pointed out that it is just the class consciousness that puts the European immigrant at a loss when, after his arrival in America, he tries to understand the *job*-conscious community where he finds his work? Sometimes he is not even aware that this class consciousness brings people's thinking close to Marxism, and in Europe has provided a fertile breeding ground for planned economy ideas, socialism, and communism.

4. "The ghost of the guild system of the Middle Ages is still abroad in the land." The guilds, together with their modern offspring, the cartels, indeed result in living conditions overshadowed by the feudal darkness of the Middle Ages. What, Dr. Daling, have the Christions done or do they do, and especially what do the religious leaders do or propose to do to let the light of Christianity shine in this darkness?

(See Felix Pinner, *Deutsche Wirtschaftsführer*, Verlag der Weltbühne, Charlottenburg, 1925. Pinner on I. G. 39 gives the following characterization of a cartel politist: ". . . everything for himself and to do nothing for the community, increasing his own assets without any scruples, disregard completely his obligations toward his country, and label all these transactions and clandestine arrangements with the word 'National.'" (by translation, JI.) See also: Karl Pribram, *Cartel Problems*, The Brookings Institution, Washington, D. C., 1935. Also: Wendell Berge, *Cartels, Challenge to a free World*, Public Affairs Press, Washington, D. C., 1944. Also: Richard Sasuly, *I. G. Farben*, Boni & Gear, New York, N. Y., 1947.)

5. I am afraid that I do not quite understand Dr. Daling's conclusion that "it is folly to argue whether the Dutch system is *better* than the American. . . That would be like arguing whether a pear is better than a peach." First: does this express the feeling of the farmer in Dr. Daling's article who lacks the right to decide the location of the window in his new house? After all, what this farmer is experiencing is "government by *men*," and that is just what our forefathers in this New World since colonial days worked and fought for *not* to have. Thanks to their blood and sweat we have government by *law*. Second: The proponents of "planned economy" usually speak as if their activities were thoughtful and correct. Dr. Daling's discussion under "Paternalism" shows some good examples of it. But basically the planned economy enthusiasts in their subtle ways, just as the socialists and communists in more open and direct ways, all (as is evident up to today) come to the endgoal of the corporate state or totalitarian government. Let us not degrade our wonderful American heritage by putting it in the same fruitbasket with totalitarianism. The difference is not like between pear and peach, nor of degree, but the difference is *absolute*. No matter in what cloak other nations may dress their ideas and actions, as Americans we should recognize the differences in fundamental thinking. This is one of the responsibilities our American heritage places upon us irrespective of the anthropological roots of our ancestors.

"A Look at the Dutch" is interesting for both the immigrant and the citizen. It stimulates active thinking. Which, I suppose, is the goal and highest praise for any faculty member. Thank you, Dr. Daling!

JOHN INGWERSEN

IRS:

The state of theology in our Chr. ef. church can and should be im- roved. A more consistent and per- stent Biblical theological approach Dogmatics is certainly desirable. pointed that out in an essay written hile yet a student at Calvin Seminary nd later published in the *Calvin Forum.* was confirmed in my opinion the ear I studied in Westminster Seminary. here, I feel, Biblical Theology, to a reat extent, is coming to its own.

There is danger in emphasizing a entral doctrine. But is this empha- izing of a central doctrine not also lone when we speak of the gospel of esus Christ and proceed to stress such eachings as elect in Christ, salvation n Christ, lordship of Christ, etc? Is his then not the central doctrine — *The Preeminence of Christ?* Would his centralized emphasis not present he same dangers as any other?

I think of Matt. 28:18: all authority s given unto Me, says Christ. Who s this that has so empowered the preeminent Christ? The Father has, with whom Christ repeatedly said He was One. Shall we stress the lordship of Christ? In what direction shall we move — stress Him as Lord in the kingdom of grace, in the kingdom of power, or in the kingdom of glory? And what shall we do then with I Cor. 15:24 which speaks of the preeminent Lord, Jesus Christ, returning the king- dom to the Father?

Turn with me to Isa. 57:7: How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace; that bringeth good tidings of good, that publisheth salvation; that saith unto Zion, Thy God reigneth! Notice that peace, salva- tion, the good tidings to Jerusalem are summed up in this message: *Thy God reigneth.* This is the message the divinely appointed messengers have to speak to a sinful, miserable people. It is because Jehovah does reign that we have a gospel of Jesus Christ. Jehovah is sovereign; therefore He did and does control all events including the incarnation, death, resurrection and present lordship of Christ at the Father's right hand, Pentecost, our regeneration, sanctification, etc.

It is my considered opinion that if we as a Reformed people will continue to search the Scriptures *diligently,* and *prayerfully* study this unfathomable mine of revealed truths, we will be given new, fresh insights which will clarify difficult problems pertaining to, and enhance our appreciation for, the Biblical emphasis on the sovereignty of the *Triune God.* If some theologians have stripped the sovereignty of God to a naked, bare, bold doctrine let us be careful not to cast it aside altogether. So doing, we would finish off the mistake initiated by others. Rather, let us hold to the Scriptural teaching and seek to comprehend all that is involved in the blessed fact of the Triune God's sovereignty. Is it not be- cause He is sovereign that Jehovah could and did create the universe and its inhabitants, have an eternal counsel which rendered sin's entrance into the world certain and yet not be the author of sin, bring condemnation (as the wage of sin) upon all men and yet love them, have His wrath rest upon men, yes, also upon the elect until their regeneration, and yet love them? Is it not because God is sovereign that He can be jealous; be wrathful toward and yet love man at one time? Does sovereignty not mean for one thing that the Triune God in His Being and mysterious ways is far above our com- prehension?

My plea is for a continued march on the road which Reformed fathers have struggled forward on. That road of faith in and submission to a sovereign, infinite God may become more difficult to discern and proceed on; it may require a slower pace than we desire, but let us nevertheless not retreat or side-track. . . .

By all means, let us as Reformed theologians seek to revive a real interest in a genuine, Biblically-oriented Re- formed theology. Let us present such a living theology in both Reformed pulpits and in mission halls and fields. Have we not the assurance that the Holy Spirit will bring in converts into the church of Christ if we, as a church, are faithful in proclaiming the whole gospel of God — summed up in two words: *Jehovah Reigneth?*

G. Van Groningen

Sirs:

The subject "Toward a Distinctive Curriculum for Christian Education" should engage the attention of all of us who are committed to the cause of Christian education. The article bear- ing the above title which appeared in the *Reformed Journal* should set us all to thinking what it is we really want for our children. The article raised many questions in my mind. One of them is: "Is it really true that 'to the extent that he (a person) sees and experiences no laws or is aware of no pattern, he knows not God in general revelation?' "

It just happened that I read this passage from George MacDonald, an eminent Scotch writer of the nineteenth century, the same day I read the *Journal.* It seems to me that he answers the question.

"What, I ask, is the truth of water? Is it that it is formed of hydrogen and oxygen? . . . Is it for the sake of the fact that hydrogen and oxygen combined form water that the precious thing exists? Is oxygen-and-hydrogen the divine idea of water? . . . . The water itself, that dances, and sings and slakes the wonderful thirst — symbol and picture of that draught for which the woman of Samaria made her prayer to Jesus — this lovely thing itself, whose very wetness is a delight to every inch of the human body in its embrace — this water is its own self its own truth, and is therein a truth of God. Let him who would know the love of the maker become sorely athirst and drink of the brook by the way — then lift up his heart — not at that mo- ment to the maker of oxygen and hydrogen, but to the inventor and mediator of thirst and water, that man might foresee a little of what his soul may find in God . . . . As well may a man think to describe the joy of drinking by giving thirst and water for its analysis, as imagine he has re- vealed anything about water by resolv- ing it into its scientific elements. Let a man go to the hillside and let the brook sing to him till he loves it, and he will find himself far nearer the fountain of Truth than the triumphal car of the chemist will ever lead the shouting crew of his half-comprehending followers. He will draw from the brook the water of joyous tears, 'and worship Him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters.'

The truth of a thing, then, is the blossom of it, the thing it is made for, the topmost stone set on with rejoicing; truth in a man's imagination is the power to recognize this truth of a thing; and wherever, in anything that God has made, in the glory of it, be is sky or flower or human face, we see the glory of God, there a true imagination is beholding a truth of God."

According to MacDonald not only the physicist but also the child, the un- lettered, and the poet can know God in general revelation.

Gertrude Borduin

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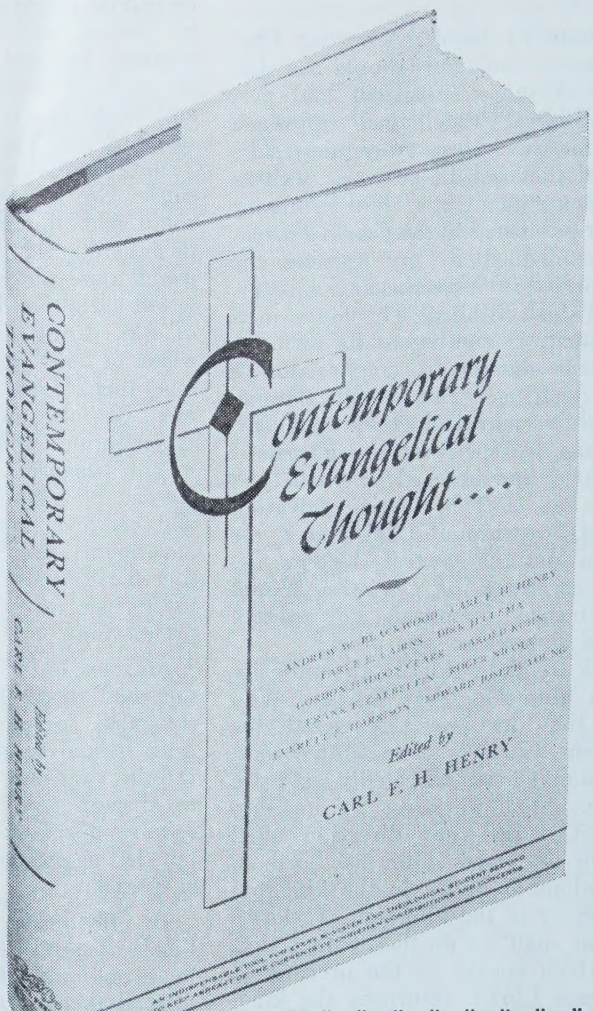

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